

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A slider comprising:
a leading edge;
a trailing edge;
a bearing surface; and
a transducer; and
a center split feature separate from and forward of the transducer and disposed proximate
a centroid of the slider, the center split feature comprising:
a first center split surface that is substantially level with
the bearing surface;
a second center split surface disposed forward of the first center split
surface that ~~is~~and recessed from the
bearing surface; and
a third center split surface disposed forward of the second center split
surface and recessed from the second center split surface;
wherein the first, second and third center split surfaces form a step
like pattern, and are disposed such that fluid flowing over the
bearing surface flows over the third, second and first center split
surfaces respectively.
2. (Currently Amended) The slider of claim 1 further comprising:
a cavity dam disposed proximate to the leading edge, the cavity dam having a media
facing surface that is raised above the first recessed surface ~~second center split~~
surface; and
a subambient pressurization cavity disposed between the cavity dam and the center split
feature.
3. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 2 further comprising:

a first side rail disposed along a first side of the slider;
a second side rail disposed along a second side of the slider.

4. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 3 wherein the first and second rails are continuous with the center split feature.

5. (Withdrawn) The slider of claim 2 wherein the first center split surface is connected to the cavity dam and the first center surface surrounds the subambient pressurization cavity.

6. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 2 wherein a portion of the subambient pressurization cavity includes the third center split surface.

7. (Currently Amended) The slider of claim 1 wherein the first recessed ~~second center split~~ surface is recessed between about .15 microns and about .3 microns.

8. (Currently Amended) The slider of claim 1 wherein the second recessed ~~third center split~~ surface is recessed between about 2 microns and about 5 microns.

9. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 2 wherein the center split feature further includes:

a pair of arms extending from the center split feature towards the cavity dam, each arm coupled to a side edge of the center split feature;
wherein the pair of arms define side edges of the subambient pressurization cavity.

10. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 9 wherein the pair of arms connect the center split feature with the cavity dam.

11. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 10 wherein a top surface of the pair of arms is

substantially level with the second center split surface.

12. (Previously Amended) The slider of claim 10 wherein a top surface of the pair of arms is at the bearing surface.

13. (Withdrawn) The slider of claim 9 further comprising:
a plurality of arms extending from the first center split feature towards the cavity dam, the plurality of arms spaced apart from each other and arranged about the centroid;
and
wherein the plurality of arms divide the second center split surface into a plurality of discrete areas.

14. (Withdrawn) The slider of claim 13 wherein the plurality of arms divide the third center split surface into a plurality of discrete areas.

15. (Currently Amended) A slider supporting a transducer comprising:
a slider body having a media opposing face with a leading edge and a trailing edge relative to a direction of rotation of a media surface;
a bearing surface disposed on the media opposing face, comprising:
a center split feature disposed proximate a centroid of the slider body, the center split feature comprising:
a first center split surface having a portion proximate the centroid;
a second center split surface recessed from the first center split surface;
and
a third center split surface recessed from the second center split surface;
wherein the first, second and third center split levels form a step like pattern, and are disposed such that fluid flowing over the center split feature flows over the third, second and first center split

surface respectively.

16. (Original) The slider of claim 15 wherein the slider body further comprises:
 - a cavity dam proximate to the leading edge;
 - a first side rail disposed along a first side of the slider body;
 - a second side rail disposed along a second side of the slider body; and
 - a subambient pressurization cavity disposed between the cavity dam and the center split feature.
17. (Original) The slider of claim 16 wherein the slider body further comprises:
 - a second sub ambient pressurization cavity, the second subambient pressurization cavity following, in the direction of fluid flow, the center split feature.
18. (Original) The slider of claim 17 wherein the second sub ambient pressurization cavity is divided into two separate cavities by a center rail feature.
19. (Currently Amended) A bearing surface of a slider having a leading edge and a trailing edge, the bearing surface comprising:
 - a center split feature disposed proximate a centroid of the slider surface, the center split feature comprising at least three center split levels, the center split levels having a first center split surface substantially level with the bearing surface, wherein the first center split surface has at least a portion positioned between the centroid and the leading edge;
 - a cavity dam disposed forward of the center split feature relative to a fluid flow, the cavity dam having a first portion proximate a first side edge of the slider and a second portion proximate a second side edge of the slider, wherein the cavity dam extends continuously between the first and second portions; and
 - wherein the at least three center split levels form a step like pattern, and are disposed such

that the fluid flowing over the bearing surface flows over each of the at least three center split levels respectively.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) The bearing surface of claim 19 wherein the center split feature further includes:

a pair of arms extending from the center split feature towards the cavity dam, each arm coupled to a side edge of the center split feature;
wherein the pair of arms define side edges of a subambient pressurization cavity.